

RMA OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

APRIL 6, 2006

Present: Dave Clement - Chair (USFS), Steve Eckert (WY-BLM), Ted Moore (USFS), Ken Kerr (FWS), Bill Graepler (CSFS), Paul Pooler (BIA), Marc Mullenix T2 IC (NPS), Pete Blume T2 IC (CSFS), Mike "Hoss" Hostetler (WysFD), Sherry Bauer (SD-BKF), Dick Spiess (CSFS), Bill Hahnenberg FUMT IC (BLM), Dan Moreford - Vice Chair (NPS), Shane Greer (IHC), Gilbert Bencenti (LSC), Andy Parker (CSO), Debbie Bozarth (RMC)

Visitors/Presenters: John Robertson (RMK), Matt Dean (RMK), Gilbert Bencenti (LSC),

Welcome, Introductions

IC Discussion: Kim Martin got the approval from RMCG to add PIO1 and GIST or GISS to the ICT1. Dave will get back in touch with Pete, find out who applied for these positions, and get the names back to the ops committee. Discussed how the type 1 team selection ended up.

Marc, Pete and Bill may make some adjustments to make to their rosters regarding Deputy IC's and IC Trainees. Discussed with ops committee and came up with proposals to take to RMCG at 0915. Involved fire suppression experience with the FUMT IC Trainee, jobsharing the two currently assigned T2 IC trainees until that suppression experience is accomplished, and adding a new FUMT IC Trainee in his place.

Discussion on how some people just aren't cut out to be IC's, and if this group realizes that about certain individuals, we need to be sure to communicate this to them so that they do not go into the season thinking that is their training path.

In the fall we will be re-evaluating the list of trainees. Some committee members are uncomfortable with accepting a couple of names that were not put in during the official solicitation/nomination process. Of the 5 people on list of trainees... there is one within next 5 years may be ready for trainee IC, one the ops committee needs to discuss more and defer for now, one shouldn't go any farther, and two that did not have applications in last fall - who are great choices, and don't care if they are assigned now or have to wait until an application is put in this fall.

Outcome from RMCG: Combine Dean and Len as jobshare IC Trainees on Pete's team. Don Angell continues as Deputy for Marc's team. If Marc has an opportunity to go out as IMT1 IC Trainee, Don will be able to cover the team. Mike Frary will be Marc's IC Trainee. Ken Kerr- FUMT IC T

RMK Fire Operating Plan 2006 (standards, review) Sherry and John
Reviewed the revised 03/06 plan.

Background, Sherry surveyed the field on the Cache Operating Plan. Before she did this, she started with RMK and they shared their concerns, successes, failures. Some of those include hazardous materials being shipped improperly. Orders being placed without correct ordering info, many improper unit of issues, unrealistic date and time needs, over-ordering. Through this process Sherry has gained a renewed appreciation with what RMK has to deal with. RMK has a problem getting workers, they have lost workers out the regional office, due to the move to ABQ, etc.

John's theme: **We will adapt, adjust and improvise, and do our best to overcome.**

ICBS is not going to be at the incident level for quite some time. Expanded is generally a slow down, with a lot of improperly placed orders. When ICBS is online, the orders will come through Ross to ICBS. There will be some growing pains. A lot of the guidance in this plan comes from the national plan. GBK at Boise is a BLM cache, and not a national cache. There are 9 FS and 2 BLM caches, and there are some critical differences between FS and BLM. GBK said they do not have an operating plan, but that they need one. The issue is a national interagency funding. A lot of the verbiage that was changed in the RMK plan came from the NRK operating plan. One of the first questions from a review team is "Where is your operating plan and is it signed?"

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Sherry - She has made some recommended changes to the draft from the comments received and wants the operations committee oversight to continue on to a final document.

In general it needs to be more interagency in nature, show what agreements are in place, include ordering hours, how transfer of property is done, discuss quick replenishment of IA resources, refurbishment costs procedures, stock replacement procedures.

Handout on what can and can't be done, and Sherry will be incorporating into the team SOP's.

Comment by Dan that we need to educate crews on replacement process. Suggest that a letter be sent out, to let them know what the procedures are. Currently they go to supply to ask for refurbishment.

The committee reviewed the draft cache plan in depth. Under missions statement, added verbiage... Under concept of operations, added verbiage. Suggest we add Wildland Fire Use wherever RX is mentioned. General Staffing Strategy on page 4 - May through September. Throughout document changed to geographic

Scheduling (hours of support for the cache...section 5) In the past it was based on Gacc PL. At PL's 1 & 2, when there were teams out, cache only required to be open between 0800 - 1630 M-F.

Example, on Thursday you would have to put in an order for 4 days. Not reasonable. Decided to put in verbiage...when a Ty 1 or 2 team is out, there will be 7 day coverage. If type 3 team is out will have to negotiate hours of operation.

John - bottom line is when there are people in the field we need to be able to support them. The budget has never allowed for the suggested and needed staffing. His main problem is a small workforce. The problem is that cache people have to work long seasons. Many times there is a shortage in the cache positions. Manager, supply tech, are core positions needed. Consequently, Matt, John and Betty are on alternate days. Sherry- what if the team helped them out by offering up a RCDM or a SPUL? They have also thought about finding people through the fire management program at CSU, or teachers. Another complication is when the incident is for 14 days and then your help is gone. There is always a need for Material handlers (strong backs).

Kim suggested they add verbiage in the team SOP's about supporting the cache along with something on the fact that ultimately the IC's are responsible what is ordered.

Suggestion - Cache vans, if there is an area that is experiencing a lot of activity, maybe we could set up a small cache, and then make deliveries from there. Nationally it has been suggested going to zones of influence. Strategic planning. There are a whole lot of plans being used out. Mobile caches, start in SWC and move with the fire season. Suggestion - Jim - Pre orders could be written in as a preparedness level item.

Ken - From his perspective there has been a good effort to adjust the plan, and improve issues that were brought up in 2003. Can we still improve? There are probably ways and just make sure that the operating plan is still being worked on. All kinds of things can be included, any issues John has been trying to work through, make sure he includes them in some way or another into the plan. That way we will all be operating on the same page, and this should help to raise the trust level.

Appreciate the fact that they came in and talked to the ops committee about this stuff...also appreciate Sherry's hard work on it, and talking to all the people out there. This was echoed from Dan Moreford - we need to be proactive, and look into the future and figure this stuff out.

Dave would like to have the plan given to incoming teams at the initial briefing.

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Sherry - Working through this process has solidified the fact that trust and communication go hand in hand. Would issues papers coming out of the operations committee to RMCG or NMAC be helpful? John thinks that the more voices they hear it from the better.

Summary.... She summarizes her changes to the op plan - cooperation and communication. They will continue to work on the plan, and then submit for final approval.

She read a letter from CV Roberts to the cache dated 8-13-05 which was a letter of thanks and acknowledgement of good service by the RMK.

Gilbert Bencenti for Type 2 A team: Thanks for your help last year...good work by the staff....

One question: Sundance...100% loss on that one. How do we deal with something like that?

It reflects on the team performance. Question from Ken, can the team write a letter that would go into the files...it would explain the position and what was going on and would be a part of the incident file. It went back into a cache restock. By definition it was a Ty 2 incident. Because they got stuck with 2 - Ty 2 incidents. Would have made more sense as an incident replacement. But it was a complication to try to get the loss use down as much as possible.

Fire loss records intolerance...Sherry has never agreed with how that comes out at the end of the year without being able to make it better. John - ICBS will help that somewhat.

Question to Sherry - Did the Logistics chief's come up with a cache van addition? Yes, Sherry does have a list, and she is still getting suggestions. Caution from John - the cache vans are already pretty full, and not sure that they can fit in much more.

IHC Operating Plan, Preparedness Schedules - Shane

Pat Lange wrote up proposal for IHC out of area rotations, handout.

History...The idea of doing this started a few years ago...Some crews had been ordered in the past, some missed out on assignments out of area to AK and FL, there was some inequity of how assignments were given.

SWC has a crew rotation. They would like to have a similar rotation for RMA. Keep being told it needs to be closest forces, but does closest forces really apply when you are filling a jet...to go to east coast, Alaska. Look at it from a superintendent's perspective - loss of experience a factor, being able to plan your days regarding needed appointments when there is a low probability of going out, and finally to the lower GS grades, the loss of 10 days out is big money when they count on a certain amount. Perception is the remote, rural areas miss out as they are not always the closest forces. Big losers this year were the Wyomings, Tatanka's. There are pros and cons to a rotation, if you are assigned at the time, you lose out as you would be passed up. The shots don't think it is working with the closest resources and cost efficiency for the jet load type of assignments. If we had a rotation, then RMC does not have to worry about who goes. The IHC don't want to eliminate common sense from the equation. This would really only apply to those assignments that are far away, when closest forces is really not a factor.

Andy - Need to look at 5 and 10 year averages. Equity is more on the long term averaging out...

Rmc does conscientiously look at it trying to keep it fair. Sometimes the perception is that it gets overlooked, but each assignment is evaluated by the coordinator, and center manager.

Discussion on what Nic says in their mob guide...actual wording from the 2006 mob guide is: "NIC will maintain availability status of Ty 1 Crews, but will not recognize internal geographic area rotations of these crews." This is true as IHC are national resources, but the order always come to the Gacc who decides who will fill it. Agree with trying to maintain parody.

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Dave feels the Gacc should look at it closely, but not have a rotation. Is there an issue with national resources vs local units holding onto them? There is that perception.

Question, do all 7 sup's want it? No, but none of them are against it. And some are in prime locations. Another thing to think about, we are not all in fire season at the same time, this needs to be factored into the decision making process. There are always going to be some judgment calls. Severity, north crews go south. Nationally they need to get crews moving.

Tatanka and Wyoming are the big drivers. Last year, pike was 2nd lowest. Number of times out vs number of days out? Bill would rather put it back on the coordination center and try to even out the days. Hoss, if we are looking at this stuff already, not sure how we could do it better.

One of the pro's is that with a rotation it gives Ihc sup more flexibility in figuring out when to allow AL, doctor appts, etc. Also suggest they call the ops duty officer for checks and balances. There are always going to be some judgment calls.

Decision: Superintendents will send email to Rmc of their availability... who will make it an intel function to go through the decision process. Post records on the web.

There is now a **drawdown matrix** in the RMC mob guide. Shane feels we need to revisit the numbers showing for crews...not sure the numbers listed are ok,

Also interesting on drawdown, NIC has control at 4 and 5 but our mob guide says all 7 stay.

Preparedness Schedules

Dave	San Juan	4/28
Ken	Pike	5/10
Andy	Roosevelt	5/11
Dan	Alpine	5/22
Steve	Craig	5/23
Hoss	Wyoming	5/22
Dan/Dave	Tatanka	5/22

Communication Advance Team (CAT) Mark Hall -Jefferson County IMT Handout

The CAT has been used on Jefferson County incidents.

The goal is to transition the team a whole day ahead of time. The first shift is usually spent setting all the gear up. The CAT will get the communications established and functioning before team is in place.

Specifics: Fairmont fire has put together a CAT program, brought them in as cooperators, paid at the AD rate. They are cooperators under a serf agreement whose rates apply anywhere in the nation. 16 people, includes 3 COML, 2 COMT, 4 INCM, 7 RADO. Most of them have day jobs and can't get supervisor approval for a fulltime commitment. Incident Communications Technician (COMT), Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM) Communications unit leader (COML).

The Swc has implemented Cat teams. CA and EBC are interested. Is RMA interested?

They would be an asset to RMA. Normally they would be out for 72 hours max. This is similar to what Bill Ringwald used to do before he was retired. Trying to formalize the program.

The way it would work is that the incoming COML approves having a CAT team. If possible, would drive to cache to pick up starter system that has been ordered through Ross, or else meet the aircraft delivering it. The O# would go to incident if incident wants them, but initially would be

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ordered by RMC on a RMA Support order. RMACC would pick up the cost, gets paid for by the fire. They are a stand alone unit.

Mark would be the lead person in charge of the CAT. He would get O#'s from Rmc. They would only stay in place as long as the incident wanted them, but ideally would be 2 to 3 days. Would follow established dispatch rules. The transportation piece is still being figured out. Need large scale pickup trucks. There are 11 boxes involved in the kits. Have started to add a Uhf link now. Need a 4 wheel drive in order to get repeaters up to the top of mountains.

Communications is usually the biggest issue on incidents out there. Solution - get the system in place a day or so earlier. In a cost effective, timely manner. They would be the first on scene, and then could leave once installed. The COML in the past has not had the experience and the time to do it. COMT is the main position.

Sherry-How do you gather intelligence, where the ICP will be set up, and the repeaters that will work out? Part of the process while they are en route is looking at the topo map and tying in with the team.

Another benefit to the CAT team is that they are current with the new technology. There are 5 new radios in system that weren't there last year. Comment from Kim Martin...in the next 5 years there will be a major change in the communications realm, that will be so different than what we have currently.

The Cat team could be a resource in lieu of a COMT who is not available for a full assignment.

Scenario: The call comes in from local agency requesting an Imt. Rmc checks with the IC assigned as to whether or not he would like to use the CAT. If so, then RMC notifies the cat leader, making sure they immediately contact the assigned COML for the team.

The CAT would send out 2 COMT's plus a trainee. Would just need one vehicle. They would pick up the starter system and go set it up, keeping in communication with the team COML.

Question, depending on the complexity of the incident, would you be ordering additionally repeaters? That would be the IMT COML's decision.

COML (Bob) in the meeting said that the first 24 or 48 hrs, he does not have a COMT or a RADO...if he can get the backbone of the system put in then it will help him concentrate on the 205, the incident assignments, phones put in, etc. He is in favor of it.

Ray W -Sounds like it is a needed asset here in the RMA.

Jim thinks it could be easily added to the checklist currently used for the teams.

The IC's have the cost accountability, and it would be up to them if they want to use the CAT team. Marc...especially on the front range, where the 800 frequency is frequently used, it is more complex. Having the CAT would mean communications can be set up faster than waiting for the king radios to come and being programmed. There is a Safety element, so this is a no brainer, really. Be advised that in general, CAT teams will not come with tac devices. Mark personally has one but if he is not with the team they would not generally have one.

Will they accept any more people onto the CAT teams? Yes. It would be a good idea to get people across the region for strategic placement. They would have to have S258 before they have a trainee taskbook initiated. Give Mark the names.

Decision: It is the Operations Committees recommendation to the RMCG to implement CAT's when appropriate. Add it to the RMC Team checklist.

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S420/S520/S620 Nominations

Kim Bang - Gacc Training Representative (GATR) Rodney Redinger, KS Forest Service, new incoming Training Chair.

Add Rodney to the mailing list. Kim works with the operations committee in collecting nominations. She handed out this year's proposal for nominees. Also, the Training committee has approved the draft proposal. Kim took a shot out correcting the flowchart in the ops guide.

She sends out announcement for S420. Nominations come back to Kim.

S520 a little different in how it works. It will be taught every year now. It is going from 2 years to every year. On the back there are some things to look at. There has to be an Rmcg 420 announcement if you want more than the nomination form. Needs to come out August annually like the S520. She would prefer to have hers by 10/15 for the nomination deadline. She will have them back to her by 10/1. Propose 10/16 for ops committee fall meeting. Nov 1st for S520. Nafri comes out with an announcement every August to line officers, etc, requesting nominations for Nov. They are on a 2 year cycle. Kim will gather info from Deb Coroner.

Question about the mentoring program. Have to be thinking a year ahead.

RMCG's fall meeting starts 10/16. The Operations Committee is trying to meet the same week for travel logistics. If they meet simultaneously with the Rmcg they could give them the 420 proposals. Kim was wondering if there could be a liaison for 420/S520 who works with Kim, and then could send everything. Would like someone who doesn't rotate. To make things more consistent if that could be. Dave volunteered this time, for maybe a 2 year span.

Kim has not been keeping good track of giving chairs info of how has gone..., but she will try to be better about facilitating that. It is in the spreadsheet. Kim will email the spreadsheet out.

Dates should be on flowchart. Kim will send to Deb and we will add to ops guide. (Still waiting for it 4/22/06 db)

Suggest that we also put it on the web page. Also, add the dates into the matrix. Are the zone training reps identified somewhere? Also build it in to the web master there should be a link to zone training reps, when submit to...

S520 2008 Tentative selections:

Pam Wilson Iof ready - public affairs for SJF evaluate for 2008

Charlie Rossi Lsc ready

Dave Farmer IC ready

Todd Pechota Osc not ready for 2007 evaluate for 2008 later

Don Angell IC not ready for 2007 evaluate for 2008

Pam, Dave and Charlie Rossi are ready for 2007/2008 avail for openings that come up for 2007

Both Pete and Bill will have people avail for 2008 once the 2006 season is over.

2007 Tentative selections:

no Fsc, Lsc Roger Showman selected, , Psc Mark Giacoletto, no Sof, Iof - Justin Dombrowski, Frank Carol (BKF)

S620 Jim Jaminet Psc (wants to go in 2008), Guy King (wants more experience before he goes) Osc Don't get too hung up on the year because now we have the opportunity to select the year.

Zone training reps need to emphasize the correct way to fill out a nomination form. Recommend that we include it all, and then how well they fill it all out tells us something about if they can handle S520. Question, if we don't know them, have they been mentored? Kim's other

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recommendation is to do away with the bio and use a form that has a schematic, and could show functional training completed, then check box if it has been completed. So the plus would be that the form would find you enough info to make the decision. Basically she is the nomination filter person. If 420, she sends it to the 420 training course coordinator. She tells them we have people who need the training. If there are openings, she will facilitate trying to get people into the class. 2006 is hosting S-420 this year, and she will send out
She just got the numbers back on the needs analysis. When is the course going to be? She said to give her some ideas on when to hold the training. January works well.

Dave, discussed earlier with Ic's that we need to step up to the plate to identify people who can move up to these levels. Ic's need to be deeply involved in finding these folks, and making sure that these people get the nomination forms.

Concern: What about those we send to the class and don't pass? What are we doing about it? The L381 course helps to project simulations. We don't want to set people up for failure, and we want to get them on a training path.

Evidentially we are sending people that aren't ready, because we have had a couple failures. The IC needs to be a part of it. Each course coordinator will send a letter back to the supervisor. It is an agencies responsibility to take care of that person. IF they fail, do they go to the top of the priority list? Yes, and it is an issue. She is not sure where the ops committee is really at in the process. We think that it needs to come to this group for evaluation. Have they gone to L381 and received more experience?

Question, from Kim Martin - who is accountable for these people that are coming up?

The agency is available. The agency rep needs to make sure the people are taken care of. That actions are taken to help the people. Also, need to identify a mentor. He thinks this will really help that then someone will follow through.

Something to our advantage, is that a lot of us go out together, teach 420 and are on the ops committee, then there is a possibility of the feedback between the different realms.

Some people don't know what is expected of them when they take the class. Part of the problem is that the class is not meeting the needs, and it is being worked on nationally.

Another 420 class is going on in July in southern area. Kim will go back through the list the ops committee has already given her, and she will let us know if anyone gets in. Kim will send out the 420 list again...she thinks it is a solid list. But needs a bit more info for the 520 list.
She left a folder of stuff for us to look at.

Bill: Bill Easterling, OSC T would like to be added to the priority training list. Cooperator with Genessee...he was out on assignment when noms went out last year...meets all pre-requisites...needs to be added to the mob guide...pen and ink. No objections, add him. Debbie will give to Marco for updating electronically.

Incident Mngt. Teams Monitoring and Evaluation

Dave handed out draft checklist and went over the intent of it. To do a quality control check on the new team. After Rmcg looked at it, they decided it would be good for all. Lots of discussion on how realistic it is to fill out the form and who will do it and how do we decide who gets the evaluation.

Question, don't we get this from the agency administer at the end of a team assignment.

Thinking that the line officer has a lot to do with the success of a team.

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It seems like there is always someone there from a higher level whenever there is a team sent out. Maybe all of this stuff needs to be connected.

Question about how individuals are going to be paid for doing this evaluation-the fire will pay for it. There is a real concern about how we are going to make this happen? Even if we tried to do 5 evaluations, one for each team, that is a significant amount of time commitment. Truly it is the agency reps job to do this. We think this might be a duplication of effort. Maybe members of the RMCG should be the ones to do this, side benefit - they would get out on the fires. If people on the committee have the time to do this great.

Dave knows there are things that happen out there that don't get addressed...

Could be used like a preparedness review, then could use it on the first assignment of the team.

Dave, Hoss and Dan will be the ones to check it out. Litmus test.

Discussion on Ty 2 SD team.

Marc - gets a lot of feedback from agency administrators and cooperators.

Individual team member performance: Discussion on evaluation from last fall from one area command, Marc has not seen the official response that got softened, and he cannot get a copy of it. Evaluation process needs to be defended, and including all the way to the end. We need to follow the process. Marc needs to see the final, it has been sent to WO. Ops committee has concerns that this was not shared appropriately.

This is an Rmcg issue. We need to have closure on this, before the season. Dave will follow up.

Present after lunch: Hoss, Steve, Dan, Marc, Bill, Ken, Shane, Dick, Sherry, Dave

Interagency Severity Coordination Summer Conference Calls

Dave wanted to bring it up for discussion. Would like to basically have additional dialogue in order to know what each other are doing.

First let's decide what the ops committee's role would be in this...or do we want the committee reps talking together. KS talks about once a week. PL, burn bans, severity discussions, maybe just an emphasis item to make an effort to make the contacts. Like if everything goes to in a hand basket, what is the Fws expectation as they have lots of acres, but the federal component

From Shane's perspective with his new role as Forest Fmo, it would be good to have ops committee in the know. Dave worries about the impacts on a state wide program. Dave and Ken will dialogue on it, anyone else is welcome as well.

Review Charter and Ops Guide

The charter has been signed, just need to review a few parts, IC,

Does anyone else need anything? No it is good as it is.

Also discussed that they would like to have a clear process...need to have it spelled out. Soliciting for ICs, selecting ICS, soliciting for team members, selecting team members. Will discuss during charter-ops guide review.

Ops Guide...page 19 the top bullet...could add ..."and IC"

Review Action Logs, New RMCG Initiatives

Issue Paper (Taskbooks and WFU/Wildland Fire assignments)

Add Plans to this in the issue paper.

Ken gave copy of the letter to Dave. We need a copy for the ops files.

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One change, instead of required, it is recommended as per RMCG.

It is up to the agency certifier.

The ops committee still feels that to be a good ops chief, it is good to have experience on both sides. The agency certifier would recommend that they need to have experience on both types of fires...wildland, fire use on a taskbook. We all recognize the weaknesses in the taskbook's, and in the RMA we try to do what we can do...be dialed in...eventually it will be a seamless transition.

Talked to John Symoniak on the Wfsa product, some day it will be one document that will work for suppression and fire use. It will be a good agency administrator document.

Need to make sure a copy of the issue paper is circulated...put it on the web page?

When Dave talked with RMCG Tuesday, Kermit and Diana Patera were there, and asked for us to come up with specifications for air operations trailers. There needs to be minimum standards for these trailers. With Eatis, they would be coming up with standards for office trailers...pre-identified contracts for trailers... Sherry will take it to the logs chiefs. For optimum size and configuration.

Critical Shortages List:

A request from Rich Homann on what the critical shortages list currently is. Pete Blume could get this information from the application matrix, and any position with less than 5 applicants is a critical shortage.

Air Operations: AOBD, ASGS, ATGS, HEB1.

Finance: FSC1, FSC2, TIME, COST, PROC CLMS

Operations: SOF1, OSC1

Logistics: GSUL, COML, SECM, FACL

Plans: RESL, SITL

C&G: ICT1, IOF1

Sherry...Cache replacement restock...can we send something out to the Fmo's. Hoss would distribute to cooperators...she will send out a letter.

The Operations Committee would like to recognize Bill Graepler for all his efforts with the Operations Committee since 1995. He has served faithfully and it is appreciated. Bill is retiring in July.

Fall Meeting will be the week of October 16th in Cody in conjunction with the RMCG.